

THE PROMPT

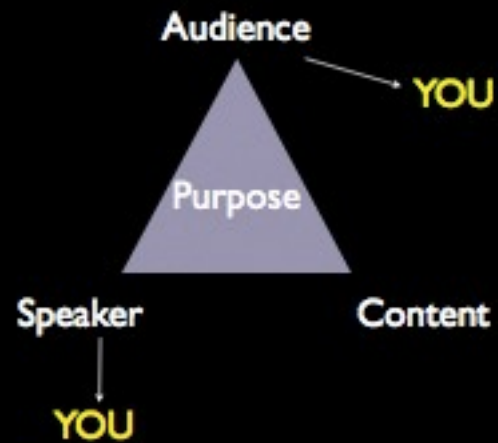
All stories of first-hand war experience highlight the same themes.

After considering this statement, draw evidence from All Quiet on the Western Front, The War Tapes, Rob Pfeiffer's guest appearance, and a first-hand veterans interview to defend, challenge, or qualify this statement in a thoughtful, organized essay.

Constructing Synthesis

<u>All Quiet</u>		Rob Pfeiffer		
+				
<u>War Tapes</u>	+	+		
+			+	YOU = ???
Veteran's interview		Outside experience?		

The Rhetorical Situation



Use of first person

“ | ”

PICK YOUR POSITION

Consider the statement:

All stories of first-hand war experience highlight the same themes.

- ⇒ Do you agree? DEFEND
- ⇒ Do you disagree? CHALLENGE
- ⇒ Do you think the statement is somewhat true and somewhat false? QUALIFY

Choose a position.

DECIDE ON YOUR CLAIM AND DIVIDE
SUPPORT FOR IT INTO DIFFERENT
SECTIONS

claim + support = argument

While you may end up focusing on one text over another, your essay should contain at least two substantial references to *All Quiet* and *The War Tapes* and one substantial reference to a personal interview. (This could be Rob Pfeiffer or the interviews at Cole Land Transportation Museum.)

You may also make reference to other first person accounts of war.

Organization should be based on big themes you can or cannot see across the different sources. It's a synthesis when you combine different ideas from different sources.

Organization should NOT be around different texts. Don't have one paragraph that discusses themes that come up in *All Quiet* and another that talks separately about *The War Tapes*. This isn't synthesis.

WHICH THEMES?

Based on your position, consider different themes that you might bring into discussion.

- ⇒ War dehumanizes
- ⇒ War creates strong bonds between soldiers
- ⇒ War destroys the lives of those who fight even if they're not killed
- ⇒ War is a betrayal of an innocent younger generation by its leaders
- ⇒ Alternate themes you have observed and would like to discuss

Which ones can you discuss with specific details?

SEQUENCING

Once you choose 2-3 themes, consider appropriate order of points. Is there a way you can order the ideas so that one leads into the next into the next? Build forward momentum toward the big picture, which you'll discuss in the conclusion (why is it important that the themes are similar?).

- ⇒ Does 'War dehumanizes' naturally lead to 'War destroys the lives of those who fight...'?
- ⇒ Do you want to start with negative aspects of war and then lead to positive ones? Or the other way around?
- ⇒ Are some of the themes most present in the beginning parts of the stories, and others come clearer once you get deeper into the story?

SAMPLE INTRODUCTION:

Opening sentence sets up context for the question

I mention titles and authors of both works and the name of the person I interviewed

Soldiers seem to tell the same kinds of stories about war, no matter when and how they served in war. In *All Quiet on the Western Front* by Erich Maria Remarque, the first person narrator, Paul, provides personal observations about how World War I felt like from the point of view of the soldier. In *The War Tapes*, directed by Deborah Scranton, soldiers serving in Iraq also show what their experiences are and how they feel about the role of the soldiers. These two stories highlight the same themes as the personal interview I had with Charles McClean of the Air Force, including the idea that war dehumanizes and destroys the lives of those who fight even if they're not killed but that war also creates strong bonds between soldiers.

I list all three subpoints I'll discuss in the essay, in the order I'll discuss them.

Using the thesis to build the whole essay

BODY PARAGRAPH #1

THESIS: All stories of first-hand war experience highlight the same themes.

CONTROLLING IDEA: War dehumanizes.

TOPIC SENTENCE: Both stories emphasize how the situation of war makes soldiers act in ways that would not be acceptable if it was peacetime.

BODY PARAGRAPH #2

THESIS: All stories of first-hand war experience highlight the same themes.

CONTROLLING IDEA: War destroys the lives of those who fight, even if they're not killed.

TOPIC SENTENCE:

BODY PARAGRAPH #3

THESIS: All stories of first-hand war experience highlight the same themes.

CONTROLLING IDEA: War creates strong bonds between soldiers.

TOPIC SENTENCE:

Sequence of sentences in a body paragraph.

1. Topic sentence (focus subpoint of the paragraph as a whole)
2. Sentence setting up idea from one text
3. Quote from one text
4. Follow up from quote (what does this quote show?)
5. Sentence transitioning to second text and setting up idea from that text
6. Quote from second text
7. Follow up from quote (what does this quote show?)
8. Sentence that summarizes importance of this subpoint to the idea overall (why is it important that the theme is or isn't the same in both texts?)

Suggested length = 8+ Sentences total

SAMPLE BODY PARAGRAPH

Topic sentence sets up the ideas of the whole paragraph

Context for quote to come

Here's the quote, edited with ellipses to make my main point

Both stories emphasize how the situation of war makes soldiers act in ways that would not be acceptable if it was peacetime. After Paul and his comrades have been bombarded for days by the French, they start to go a little crazy. When the whistle finally comes for them to attack the French, Paul says, "We have become wild beasts... If your own father came over with them you would not hesitate to fling a bomb at him" (Remarque 113-114). Paul is a reflective narrator, but at this point, it's kill or be killed. Steven Pink shows the same feeling when he is filming the bodies of insurgents killed in firefight. He says he regrets that he wasn't personally responsible for killing these guys, and doesn't object when a dog takes a mouthful of flesh from the dead bodies. This seems so cruel and inhumane, but his mind has been changed by being under the kind of tension that war creates. All these war stories emphasize how soldiers live by different standards during their experiences in war.

After a quote, give author and page number. The period comes after the parenthesis - the citation is part of the sentence.

End the paragraph not with a quote or even talking about a specific detail, but by commenting on the significance of your observations.

PREPARING THE WORKS CITED

McClean, Charles [insert name of the veteran you interviewed here]. Personal interview. 30 September, 2011.

Pfeiffer, Rob. Personal interview. 20 September, 2011

Remarque, Erich Maria. *All Quiet on the Western Front*. New

York Ballantine Books, 1982. Print.

The War Tapes. Dir. Deborah Scranton. Docudrama, 2007.

DVD.

author's
name
(last, first)

place of
publication

who
published?

title of work - underline or italics if a major
work, in quotes if published with other pieces

date published

form you used